MULTIPLE RESOURCES OF ANNISTON

CALHOUN COUNTY, ALABAMA

| Historic name: Common name: | Peerless Saloon Diamond Jewelry | Owner: | Mrs. Yvonne Burdette 15 Alpine Lane, Parlmont Plaza Chelmsford, Massachusetts 01828 |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|---|
| Address: | 13 West 10th Street | | |
| Acreage: | less than one acre | UTM: | 16/608420/3724540 |
| Verbal Boundary: | follows: beginning at t | he nort | Block 132, part of Lot 28 as hwest corner of Tenth and Market an alley, thence west along the |

south side of said alley 20 feet, thence south of equal width 120 feet, thence east along the north side of Tenth Street to the point of beginning.

Architectural Design: Victorian Neoclassical

Date of Construction: 1899

Statement of Significance:

Criterion A - Commerce:

The Peerless Saloon building is significant for its association with one of the first elaborate saloons operated in Anniston after the city was opened to the sale of liquor in 1890. The building is a symbol of the bitter struggle waged in Anniston during the late 1880s over the wet-dry issue that was finally resolved by a State Supreme Court decision in 1890 that overturned a local referendum which had banned the sale of liquor in the city.

Criterion C - Architecture:

The Peerless Saloon building is significant architecturally as a highly developed almost manneristic - example of Victorian Neoclassical design motifs applied to a small commercial building. The scale and proportions are well handled so that the small building is not overpowered by the bold elaboration of the entablature and balustrade.

Description:

Situated on the north side of Tenth Street in the block just west of Noble Street beside an alley called Market Street, this small but richly ornamented two-story brick building is now vacant and deteriorating. The architectural detailing, however, is still intact. It includes two fluted galvanized iron pilasters flanking the storefront on the first floor and carrying caps enriched with egg-and-dart molding and an entablature with applied fleur-de-lis above that. The second floor is divided into three bays by four brick pilasters with stone bases and iron Corinthian capitals, carrying an ornate galvanized iron entablature with a very wide frieze embellished with a series of garlands, then denticulation, and above that, modillions. Atop the cornice is a very ornate balustraded parapet of galvanized iron. The front part of the building is capped by a hipped roof punctuated by a dormer. The elaborate facade details wrap around the east side one bay so that they are visible from Noble Street. (See photograph.) Back of that first bay, the remainder of the building has a flat roof and is five bays long. At the first level paired segmentally-arched smaller windows have stone sills and at the second level are paired larger windows with flat arches.

In the interior, the original massive arched and mirrored back bar ornately carved of mahogany over basewood still remains. It was purportedly exhibited at the St. Louis Exposition in 1904. The original gold leaf ceiling is now gone.

Though deteriorating, the structure is remarkably unaltered and intact.

Historical Summary:

This building was one of the first elaborate saloons built in Anniston after liquor was legalized in 1890. The wet-dry issue had been bitterly fought in the town, with Samuel Noble one of the staunchest defenders of prohibition. In 1887 the people of Anniston had voted against liquor. After a tarnished image resulting from some affairs involving bootleggers, after Noble's death, and after the State Supreme Court had set aside the election of 1887, the City Council adopted a resolution to issue liquor licenses. A number of empty stores were soon rented as saloons. But the "Peerless Saloon" was built specifically to serve the newly legalized function in grand style.

Since World War I the building has housed pawn shops and a jewelry store and has been vacant for the past three years.

